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ABSTRACT

This document provides information on the Jones Center Vocational/Academic Program of the Granite School District (Utah), the purpose of which is to maintain or reintegrate students who are potential high school dropouts or dropouts into appropriate educational alternatives. Its mission statement is followed by a list of program components, including customization to individual needs, highly structured academics, linkage with postsecondary and trade schools and outside agencies, and training in life, social, and problem-solving skills. The rationale and need for such a program is discussed. An outline states the program purpose as: (1) the reintegration of special education high school dropouts into their neighborhood high school; (2) identification of appropriate educational alternatives within the district or community, such as other educational programs or job training program; or (3) development of a program at the Jones Center tailored for high school students at risk whose needs would not be met by the other two options. These steps are listed: district office pupil service department notification of dropouts or potential dropouts; contact with student and parents and placement of student in one of the above options; and district level meeting, if necessary, to identify a program. Data to be presented to those involved with the students' programs are outlined. (YLB)

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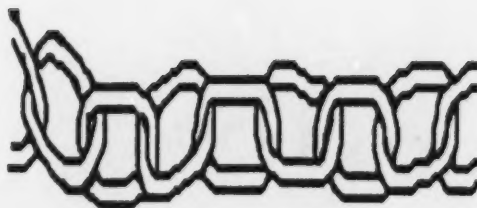
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Characteristics of a Dropout Student



MISSING LINK



**JONES CENTER VOCATIONAL/ACADEMIC PROGRAM
(JCVA)
Granite School District**

Mission Statement: It is the mission of the Granite School District Jones Center Vocational Academic Program (JCVA) to maintain and/or reintegrate students who are potential high school dropouts or dropouts into appropriate educational alternatives.

Program Components: The Granite School District Jones Center Vocational Academic Program (JCVA) will combine the following components:

1. Customization of the program to meet the individual needs of each student involved;
2. An environment which will help students build independence
3. A highly structured academic program set up so students receive credit for the amount of time spent on task and mastery of skills;
4. A program specifically designed to work with high school drop outs who have tried other options and were unsuccessful;
5. Reintegration back into the educational system;
6. Linking with post secondary and trade schools to provide a smooth transition for further education;
7. Linking with outside agencies to provide future support and resources;
8. Strong in-house support system;
9. Assessment of students vocationally and academically to define appropriate placement. All students assessed do not come to the JCVA program, but assessment helps determine appropriate educational alternatives;
10. Social skills training that allow the student to perform effectively in the everyday life setting
11. Training in organizational skills needed in everyday life (i.e. time management, skills necessary on the job, etc.)
12. Training in self-monitoring and problem solving which allow the student to avoid behaviors which may create a failure situation.

Program Rationale:

A Student at Risk is any student who, because of his/her individual needs, requires some kind of specially designed intervention in order to achieve in school, graduate and be prepared for transition from school to post-school options. Halpern, 1985, stated that a successful and satisfying life in the community required some level of competence in three life skill domains: daily living, vocational, and social. Students at Risk tend to have deficits in one or more of these life skills domains thus becoming unsuccessful in later life. Many of the students identified in this area are dropping out prior to completion of high school. Some of the reasons found for the dropout rate are:

1. Lack of a tailored program to meet individual student needs
2. No support for students who are behaviorally dysfunctional
3. Language barrier among students and/or parents
4. Drug and alcohol abuse
5. Chronic absenteeism and truancy

Students at risk are frequently placed in vocational training programs and a major portion of their academic program is eliminated. This makes it impossible to complete high school graduation requirements. These students enter the work force without necessary academic skills to obtain and maintain a job. Students placed on minimum wage jobs through vocational training programs often lack the academic skills to move from the minimum wage job to a lifetime career. Dropouts in students at risk are high because they achieve greater success on the job than in academic subjects in the school environment.

A "school within a school" concept has been shown to be effective throughout the United States as research looks at programs for students at risk. These programs tailor the academic instruction to meet student needs. Academic and vocational skills are provided in an balanced process so the student can achieve the functional living skills necessary to be a successful contributing member of society in later life.

In a publication disseminated by the Allstate Forum on Public Issues, Labor Force 2000 (a committee made up of corporate executives, educators and representatives of non-profit organizations), the statement is made that what has been lacking is a coordinated approach between these organizations. Frequently the lack of coordination is found within the school system. This program would coordinate efforts between the district vocational training school, multicuture, counselors, resource, self-contained, high school principals and the person over dropouts in the district. Further it would provide ongoing cooperation among education, business, and the community as a whole.

Statement of Need:

Students across the United States are dropping out at ever-increasing numbers. Some states estimate a 30% or more dropout rate. There are few programs tailored to meet the academic and vocational needs of students at risk who leave school for one reason or another. There is a need to maintain students at risk in high schools and a greater need for programs that will provide a "tailored fit" to meet their needs. Many students who have dropped out of senior high school show interest in maintaining their vocational training program. These students are 22 years of age or younger and have not graduated though they have been in special education. A "tailored fit" program could entice them to return to school.

The high rate of students dropping out of school is an important factor as we look at reports that display projected jobs for the year 2000. It is projected that the work force will increase more slowly than at any time since the Depression years--less than half as fast, for instance as during the 1950s. This coupled with the fact stated by Marvin J. Cetron, author of *Schools of the Future*, that "less than 6 percent of workers will find a place on the assembly lines that once gave high school graduates and dropouts a good income. By the year 2000, 95 percent of jobs will involve time spent generating, processing, retrieving and/or distributing information much of which will be heavily computerized." Individuals without the expertise needed to secure a job will place a greater burden on society.

There is a need to develop programs that will maintain students in high school and that will provide movement into the ever diminishing work force. An academic program in conjunction with the Jones Center Vocational Training program would allow students who have dropped out to continue their education and work toward graduation. (Students completing graduation requirements outlined on their I.E.P. would graduate with a diploma through Community Education.) This program would also provide assistance in interventions to the home schools in an effort to maintain students in their designated high school prior to the time the student drops out.

This program's purpose would be to maintain and/or reintegrate, students at risk who are potential high school dropouts or dropouts into their neighborhood high schools. This would be done through development of a program that would

- 1) provide support to high schools and other programs that deal with the high risk population through use of intensive academic instruction and/or trackers and
- 2) develop an academic program in conjunction with the Jones Center Vocational Training facility (see attached sheets for program outline). All activities would be coordinated through the Jones Center Director, Jeff Rydalch.

PROGRAM OUTLINE:

Purpose:

- A. To reintegrate, when possible, special education high school dropouts into their neighborhood high school.
- Alternative in-school program
 - Shortened day
 - Self-contained in resource
 - Individually designed program

- or -

- B. To identify appropriate educational alternatives within the district or community, i.e.,
- Self-contained class
 - Alternative high school
 - Community education
 - Home study program at Central High
 - Cooperative Education program (Salt Lake Community College)
 - Skill Center (Salt Lake Community College)
 - Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)
 - Job Corps (Weber Basin)

- or -

- C. To develop a program at the Jones Center tailored for high school students at risk/dropout students whose needs would not be met by the above educational options.

Steps:

1. High school designee (principal, vice-principal or counselor) will notify district office pupil service department whenever a student at risk drops out of school or has a high potential of becoming a drop out.
2. A social worker and/or a multicultural ombudsperson/tracker will contact the student and his/her parents. The social worker/ombudsperson will establish a relationship with the student and complete an assessment on student and family. All individuals working with the student will be met with in order to get a clear picture of the student. Every effort will be made to re-enter the student into a program at his/her neighborhood school. If this is not possible, district options will be reviewed and the social worker will assist the student in entering a district option, such as a self-contained class, alternative high school, etc.

3. If an appropriate existing district program cannot be identified, a district level meeting will be held. The following staff will be part of the Jones Center Vocational/Academic team.

Jeff Rydalch

- Jones Center
- Teacher of the Jones Center Vocational/Academic Unit
- Social Worker
- Multicultural Ombudsperson (where applicable)

Barbara Meyer

- District Office Counselor
- District Office Resource Department (where applicable)
- District Office Self-contained Department (where applicable)
- District Office Multicultural Department (where applicable)

Shelley Iverson

- In-school alternative dropouts

The following data will be presented by home school administration and others involved with students' program at a screening meeting.

1. Student's present problem
2. Options and/or interventions which have been tried, or considered to keep the student at his/her home high school, or in another district or community program.
3. Student's special education and cumulative folder (where applicable). These folders should contain:
 - a. most current qualifying data (if student has dropped out during the school year in which he is picked up. Qualifying data should be current.)
 - b. interventions tried
 - c. steps for returning to home school (when appropriate).
4. JCVA social worker summary report. This report will include academic/vocational training recommendations.
5. The JCVA team will determine the academic/vocational needs of the student and recommend where these needs can best be met. If the team recommends JCVA, members of this team will meet with the student and his/her parents to discuss placement. The parents are integral part of the placement process and will be asked to be active participants in all placement decisions. If the JCVA program is agreed on an IEP will

be written. If the student's needs can best be met in another setting, with additional intense instruction in academics, with behavioral tracking or with cultural awareness training and tutoring through an ombudsperson, a member of the JCVA team will assist the student in making the transition to that setting.